

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PEKING 01513 220957Z

ACTION EA-09

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INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1513

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (ZUMWALT, ELMO) CH US MILI

SUBJ: ADMIRAL ZUMWALT'S VISIT TO PRC

REFS: A) PEKING 1331; B) PEKING 1330; C) PEKING 1324;

D) PEKING 1314

1. SUMMARY: DURING THREE-WEEK VISIT BY ADMIRAL ZUMWALT AND MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY TO PRC, HE HAD CONVERSATIONS WITH LI HSIEN-NIEN, HUANG HUA, AND LI TA, AND VISITED SEVERAL CITIES OUTSIDE PEKING. PRC COMMENTS ON NORMALIZATION REPEATED FAMILIAR THEMES. ONLY MILITARY INSTALLATION VISITED WAS PLA 196 DIVISION. END SUMMARY.

2. ZUMWALT CALLED

USLO JULY 21 AFTER HIS RETURN FROM TOUR OF PROVINCES WHICH WAS HEAVY ON FACTORIES, COMMUNES AND HISTORICAL SIGHTS AND LIGHT ON MILITARY AFFAIRS. ITINERARY INCLUDED VISITS TO HUHEHOT, EHANGHAI, SHENYANG, HARBIN, TACHING AND TALIEH.

3. ONLY MILITARY INSTALLATION VISITED WAS 196TH

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DIVISION OUTSIDE PEKING, WHERE ZUMWALT AND FAMILY WERE SHOWN PLA AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND FACTORIES AND WITNESSED A FIRING DEMONSTRATION. ZUMWALT REPORTED HE WAS UNIMPRESSED WITH FIREPOWER, WHICH WAS LIMITED LARGELY TO SMALL ARMS AND A FEW BAZOOKAS. HE ALSO FELT LARGE AMOUNT OF TIME SPENT BY SOLDIERS ON PRODUCTION ACTIVITIES, COUPLED WITH

PERMANENT LOOK OF DIVISION'S HOUSING, MADE IT APPEAR UNLIKELY DIVISION COULD BE ACTIVATED AND MOVED RAPIDLY. HE ALSO THOUGH LACK OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS BELOW COMPANY LEVEL LIMITED DIVISION'S EFFECTIVENESS IN RESPONDING TO CHANGES IN BATTLEFIELD SITUATION.

4. IN HUHEHOT ZUMWALTS WERE SHOWN DEFENSIVE TUNNEL SYSTEM. HIS COMMENTS, ECHOING THOSE OF OTHER RECENT VISITORS, WERE THAT LACK OF FOOD AND WATER SUPPLY AND EXISTENCE OF FIANN-SEALABLE AIR VENTS MADE FOR LIMITED PROTECTION AGAINST NUCLEAR ATTACK.

5. WHILE IN PEKING ZUMWALT MET SEPARATELY WITH VICE PREMIER LI HSIEN-NIEN, FOREIGN MINISTER HUANG HUA, AND PLA DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF LI TA. UNLIKE BRIEF BUT SHARP EXCHANGE AT HIS WELCOMING BANQUET REMARKS BY THESE OFFICIALS AND THOSE WHO ACCOMPANIED HIM ON HIS TRIP WERE POLITE AND FRIENDLY. ZUMWALT STATED THAT LI'S REMARKS ON TAIWAN WERE LIMITED TO STATEMENT CARRIED BY NCNA (REF B) AND DID NOT TOUCH ON POSSIBILITY THAT PRC MIGHT ULTIMATELY HAVE TO USE FORCE. HE NOTED THAT NCNA HAD OMITTED HIS OWN REJOINDER THAT THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WOULD NOT STAND FOR A COMPLETE BREAK IN U.S.-TAIWAN TIES.

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6. CHINESE OFFICIALS AT VARIOUS TIMES EXPRESSED INTEREST IN CERTAIN ASPECTS OF U.S. FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICIES. THEY PROBED DEEPLY ABOUT WORKINGS OF THE "COMMITTEE ON THE PRESENT DANGER," OF WHICH ZUMWALT IS A MEMBER. AFRICAN POLICY WAS ALSO RAISED. DURING VISIT TO SHANGHAI, LOCAL FOREIGN AFFAIRS BUREAU HEAD ATTACKED U.S. POLICY TOWARD ZAIRE, REMARKING THAT EVEN IF U.S. FELT IT COULD NOT SEND MOBUTU MATERIAL AID, IT SHOULD AT LEAST HAVE PUBLICLY DENOUNCED SOVIET INTERVENTION. ZUMWALT FELT, HOWEVER, THAT CHINESE SEEMED FAIRLY CONFIDENT ABOUT AFRICAN STATES' ABILITY TO DEAL WITH SOVIETS.

7. ZUMWALT TOLD US HE HAD NEAR-VERBATIM NOTES FROM HIS CONVERSATIONS (APPARENTLY TAKEN BY HIS DAUGHTER), AND SAID HE HOPED TO BE ABLE TO PASS ON HIS IMPRESSIONS TO THE SECRETARY.
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